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Chairman: Mr. Ali ..... (Malaysia)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Saha

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Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/62/L.25: Global Forum on Migration and Development

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/62/L.29: New Partnership for Africa's Development: modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on Africa's development needs

Revised estimates relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 and to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 under sections 2, 23, 27, 28E and 35 and income section 1 and proposed related to unforeseen and extraordinary expenses arising from the implementation of decisions of the Human Rights Council

Procurement Task Force: resource requirements for procurement investigations

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 128: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 (*continued*)

Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/62/7/Add.29 and A/62/512 and Add.1-3, Add.4 and Corr.1 and Add.5)

1. **Ms. Van Buerle** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division), introducing the Secretary-General's report on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/62/512 and Add.1-3, Add.4 and Corr.1 and Add.5), said that the budget proposals for special political missions for 2008 had once again been grouped into three thematic clusters (cluster I: Special and personal envoys, special advisers and personal representatives of the Secretary-General and Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon (A/62/512/Add.1); cluster II: Sanctions monitoring teams, groups and panels (A/62/512/Add.2); and cluster III: United Nations offices, peacebuilding support offices, integrated offices and commissions (A/62/512/Add.3)). The budgets for the larger missions, namely the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), had been presented separately (in documents A/62/512/Add.4 and Add.5, respectively). In accordance with previous recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), efforts had been made to ensure that, as far as possible, the format and presentation of the budget proposals for special political missions mirrored those for peacekeeping operations. Such efforts would continue.

2. Sixteen missions had mandates extending into 2008 and one mission was currently under consideration by the General Assembly. It was anticipated that the mandates of the remaining nine missions would be extended by the Security Council for periods similar to those approved for 2007. Since the future of the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the future status process for Kosovo had been unclear when the Secretary-General's report had been finalized, no provision had been made for that mission in 2008. Moreover, in the absence of any clear indication as to the future of the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN), the provisions in the report related to liquidation requirements of up to seven months. Furthermore, although new mandates for 2008 might be approved for the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)-affected areas and the Joint Mediation Support Team for Darfur, no provision had been made for them in the report currently before the Committee. Any requirements arising from the establishment of such mandates would be submitted to the General Assembly in a separate report at a later date in accordance with established procedures.

3. The total requirements for the 26 special political missions, including those relating to the provision of safe and secure facilities for UNAMI in the amount of $180.15 million, were estimated at $587,045,200 net. The requirements for the two largest missions (UNAMA and UNAMI) accounted for nearly 71 per cent of the total resources requested. Mission-by-mission estimates and aggregate requirements by component were presented in table 1 and table 2, respectively, of document A/62/512. As far as human resources were concerned, a total of 3,997 positions had been requested for 2008, reflecting a net decrease of 1,210 positions from the 2007 level. The two largest missions accounted for approximately 66 per cent of the positions sought. Mission-by-mission staffing requirements were presented in table 3 of document A/62/512. The action required of the General Assembly was set out in paragraph 30 of the report.

4. **Mr. Saha** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/62/7/Add.29), drew attention to the recommendations contained in paragraphs 7, 15, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 29, 31, 34, 36, 38, 41, 42, 44, 45, 53, 56, 57-60, 67, 70-74, 96 and 97 of the report.

5. While the Advisory Committee welcomed the improvements in the presentation of the budget proposals, it noted with concern that, despite the significant underexpenditures recorded for all special political missions during the current biennium, travel budgets showed cost overruns for almost all missions. It also drew attention to the existence of parallel structures for the management of field operations within both the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs, and intended to revert to the issue of support for special

political missions and coordination between those two departments in the context of its consideration of the Secretary-General's proposals on the strengthening of the Department of Political Affairs.

6. The Advisory Committee took the view that the Secretary-General's proposals concerning the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities amounted to a policy matter that should be decided upon by the General Assembly. Furthermore, the proposals relating to the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia should be considered in the context of the proposals for the strengthening of the Department of Political Affairs. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee did not recommend approval of the related resources under the provisions for special political missions.

7. In sum, the Advisory Committee was recommending acceptance of most of the proposals put forward by the Secretary-General. However, it had identified a number of deficiencies in the proposals for the construction of a building for UNAMI in Baghdad. Given the scale and complexity of the project, as well as the exceptional security situation and high-risk operational environment, the Advisory Committee was recommending that the Secretary-General should be requested to submit a complete proposal, with full justifications, under section 32. In the meantime, the Committee recommended against approval of the related resources.

8. **Mr. Lukwiya** (Uganda) stressed that without peace in Somalia it would be unrealistic to expect lasting peace and stability in the rest of the Horn of Africa and the region as a whole. Since its establishment in 1995, the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) had been instrumental to efforts to advance peace and reconciliation in that country, and he trusted that, with the support of the Office, the ongoing all-inclusive political process would bear fruit. While it was regrettable that UNPOS had been unable to relocate to Somalia in 2007 owing to the unfavourable security situation, he welcomed the establishment of four regional offices in Baidoa, Mogadishu, Kismayo and Hargeisa.

9. The unfavourable security situation should not prevent the deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), and he urged Member States that had pledged troops to AMISOM to fulfil their commitments. In that connection, he was pleased to note that the expected outputs of UNPOS in 2008 included the facilitation of six meetings between troop-contributing countries, the African Union and donors in support of the AMISOM deployment. However, a decision on the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation to replace AMISOM must be taken at the earliest opportunity.

10. Since his appointment on 1 December 2006, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the LRA-affected areas had played an important role in the Juba peace talks. Accordingly, Uganda fully supported the extension of his mandate in its current form. The signing of a cessation of hostilities agreement in August 2006 had paved the way for significant progress in the country, including the holding of nationwide consultations on the modalities for the implementation of the agreement on the principles of accountability and reconciliation. LRA, with the full support of the Ugandan Government, had also initiated its own consultation process.

11. **Mr. Diab** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation attached particular importance to the good offices of the Secretary-General. However, the budget for special political missions had increased exponentially in recent years, meaning that Member States, especially the smaller countries, were having to deal with significant increases in their assessed contributions under the regular budget. Given that special political missions established pursuant to Security Council resolutions resembled peacekeeping missions, it would be preferable to determine Member States' contributions using the scale of assessments for peacekeeping operations.

12. Deficiencies were still apparent in the results-based budgeting approach. In particular, most of the expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement of the missions went beyond or ran counter to their mandates. In that connection, paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 55/231 instructed the Secretary-General to ensure that, in presenting the programme budget, expected accomplishments and, where possible, indicators of achievement were included to measure achievements in the implementation of the programmes of the Organization and not those of individual Member States. Regrettably, expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement for special political missions, as well as the linkages between them, did not always comply with the Regulations and Rules

Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, and his delegation therefore agreed with the conclusion of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), in its report on the audit of the management of special political missions by the Department of Political Affairs (A/61/357), that the Department's budget controls were inadequate and that insufficient information and justifications were provided in connection with the logical framework for results-based budgeting.

13. The budget submission for the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) was deficient in a number of areas. The expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement relating to mutual diplomatic relations between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic and to the border between those two States were not related to the mandate set out in Security Council resolution 1559 (2004); furthermore, they clearly violated the provisions of General Assembly resolution 55/231 and of Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter of the United Nations.

14. He expressed surprise at the lack of objectivity and neutrality demonstrated by the Secretariat in preparing the budget submission for the Special Envoy. Although Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) explicitly called for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon, there was no reference to that provision in the expected accomplishments or the indicators of achievement, even though Israel's forces continued to occupy a section of Lebanese territory. The Secretariat continued to focus on secondary issues that were unrelated to the Special Envoy's legislative mandate in order to deflect attention from the real problem affecting the region, namely the ongoing Israeli occupation. He was also surprised to see that the Special Envoy's mandate had been expanded to cover the implementation of Security Council resolutions unrelated to resolution 1559 (2004), even though other arrangements had been made for ensuring the implementation of those resolutions. Surely such duplication of work was undesirable.

15. He also found it odd that those responsible for preparing the budget submission in question had not considered it appropriate to mention the ongoing violations of Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity by land and by air. When drafting the budgets of special political missions, the Secretariat should be guided by the relevant legislative mandates and should give careful thought to the use of results-based budgeting techniques.

16. The General Assembly had stressed the importance of consistency between the logical frameworks of special political missions and the related legislative mandates and, at its sixty-first session, had called on the Secretary-General to redraft those frameworks. During the related negotiations, the Secretariat had also pledged to clarify its role in the implementation of the mandate relating to the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon but, regrettably, it had failed to do so.

17. He had similar concerns about the budget estimates for the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon. In particular, he wished to know why indicator of achievement (b) (iii) referred to a "reduction in violations of the Blue Line by air, sea and land" rather than to the complete cessation of such violations called for in Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). He also expressed reservations about the linkage between border demarcation activities, referred to in indicator of achievement (b) (v), and expected accomplishment (b), which dealt with the cessation of hostilities. Since that linkage was in violation of the original mandate set out in resolution 1701 (2006), he would be requesting the deletion of indicator of achievement (b) (v).

18. **Mr. Mukai** (Japan) expressed his dissatisfaction with the late submission of the Secretary-General's report. The introduction of new proposals during the final week of the session gave Member States very limited time to consider and adopt the relevant budgets and prevented them from making the necessary arrangements to ensure compliance with their financial obligations.

19. Three issues were of particular interest to his delegation: the total amount of resources requested for special political missions; the need to develop guidelines for the establishment and management of such missions; and the setting of appropriate post levels in missions with high vacancy rates. The rapid growth of the budget for special political missions was one of the reasons for the recent exponential increase in the regular budget of the Organization, and there was a real danger that constant budget increases would become the norm. Continuing to fund special political

missions from the regular budget could undermine budgetary discipline, and it was therefore time to consider the possibility of dealing separately with the budget for those missions.

20. **Mr. Berti Oliva** (Cuba) said that the late submission of the reports on special political missions hindered careful consideration of the numerous proposed increases in resource requirements. Noting that the late submission of reports had become standard practice, he wondered whether the intention was to prevent a thorough review of the budget by Member States. He welcomed the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the submission of documentation, as they reflected many of his delegation's concerns.

21. Referring to the Secretary-General's report on thematic cluster I, special and personal envoys, special advisers and personal representatives and Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon (A/62/512/Add.1), he expressed surprise that the title of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide had been changed to Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities. He concurred with the Advisory Committee that the General Assembly should be provided with further information regarding the proposal to upgrade the Special Adviser's post to the Under-Secretary-General level.

22. With respect to the proposal to establish an Assistant Secretary-General-level position of Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect, he recalled that, in its resolution 60/1 (2005 World Summit Outcome), the General Assembly had stressed the need to continue consideration of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity and its implications, bearing in mind the principles of the Charter and international law. Given that Member States had not completed that consideration, he was disturbed at the Secretary-General's proposal to appoint a Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect, particularly as the Special Adviser's mandate was not in line with the 2005 World Summit Outcome. Furthermore, in a letter dated 20 June 2007, the Chairman of the Coordinating Bureau of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries had requested the Secretary-General to take into account, in any decision on that very sensitive matter, the fact that Member States had not completed their deliberations.

23. The Cuban delegation was not convinced of the need to appoint a Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect and had serious reservations concerning the change in title of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide. It would ask more detailed questions regarding the Secretary-General's intentions in informal consultations.

24. **Mr. Sena** (Brazil) said that his delegation shared the concern regarding the late submission of reports and supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations in that regard.

25. He recalled that the situation in Guinea-Bissau remained fragile and urged the Committee not only to approve the resources requested for the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau, but also to give it the means to support new areas of action.

26. Drawing attention to page 25 of the English version of document A/62/512/Add.3, he requested that "Community of Portuguese Language Countries" should be changed to "Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries".

27. In its resolution 61/276, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the possible application of that resolution, on cross-cutting issues relating to the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations, to other field operations administered by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, including special political missions. Since Brazil was of the view that the resolution's application would be of benefit, particularly to the largest special political missions, it would have appreciated a more detailed, section-by-section analysis expanding upon the information given in paragraphs 13-15 of the Secretary-General's report (A/62/512).

28. **Mr. Yáñez Pilgrim** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) observed that the resources for special political missions had increased dramatically in recent years. It was unfortunate that the delegations were unable to carefully consider those increases, owing to the late submission of the documentation.

29. With respect to the proposal to appoint a Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect, he recalled that the paragraphs in the 2005 World Summit Outcome pertaining to the responsibility to protect had

been negotiated by a small number of delegations. In fact, that was one of the reasons why his delegation had expressed strong reservations regarding that document. It could not be said that Member States had reached agreement on the concept of the responsibility to protect. His delegation shared the disappointment expressed by the representative of Cuba that the Secretary-General had ignored the request from the Coordinating Bureau of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to take that consideration into account.

30. **Mr. Hussain** (Pakistan) said that spending for special political missions had increased drastically. He agreed with the representative of Japan that Member States needed to carefully consider whether any particular guidelines were being used to prepare the budgets for those missions. The late submission of the budgets had become a tradition; it might be inferred that the purpose was to force Member States to approve budgets which they had not had time to consider. His delegation found that practice unacceptable.

31. Pakistan noted with concern that there were no clear criteria regarding the governance and accountability of special political missions. Outputs should be carefully monitored, as it was unclear whether the results achieved by the large special missions in particular were commensurate with operating costs. Pakistan was also concerned about possible duplication and overlap of functions among the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support and the Department of Political Affairs. Similarly, while the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate might require some strengthening, it was not yet evident how that body's activities would be coordinated with those of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

32. Pakistan was disturbed at the continued extension of the mandate of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and recalled that the Security Council could not and should not legislate on behalf of national legislatures. It was also concerned that, in recruiting experts to support its work, that Committee had not paid due regard to equitable geographic distribution and gender balance.

33. With respect to the Secretary-General's appointment of a Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities, the term "mass atrocities" had not been defined. Pakistan agreed with the representatives of Cuba and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela that the General Assembly had not given the Secretary-General the authority to establish such a mandate.

34. Lastly, the intention to appoint a Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect was a clear violation of the 2005 World Summit Outcome. Paragraphs 138 and 139 of that document stated that further deliberation on the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity was required. The attempt to appoint a Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect was an effort to promote a particular point of view which had not been agreed upon at the highest level. Pakistan would take appropriate measures in collaboration with other concerned delegations.

35. **Mr. Ramadan** (Lebanon) recalled that, in its resolution 60/255 of May 2006, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to submit his future budget proposals for all special political missions in full compliance with its resolution 55/231 on results-based budgeting, in order to take into account the concerns of the Syrian delegation.

36. At the main part of the sixty-first session, the Secretary-General had submitted a report entitled "Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council: Thematic cluster I. Special and personal envoys, special advisers and personal representatives of the Secretary-General" (A/61/525/Add.1), in line with the General Assembly's request. At that time, all members of the Committee — except that same delegation — had been of the view that the logical frameworks provided by the Secretary-General for the various special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council were in line with their relevant mandates.

37. In its resolution 61/252 of December 2006, the General Assembly — again, to accommodate the concerns of the same delegation — had requested the Secretary-General to review the logical frameworks for all special political missions in order to ensure that their programmatic aspects and resource requirements were consistent with mandates of the General Assembly and the Security Council, and to report

thereon to the Assembly no later than the early part of the second part of its resumed sixty-first session.

38. In response to that request, the Secretary-General had presented his review of the logical frameworks for special political missions for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2007 at the second part of the resumed sixty-first session. At that time, the Lebanese delegation had taken note of the Secretary-General's original report (A/61/890) dated 2 May 2007, and of his view that minor adjustments needed to be made to the logical frameworks for three special political missions: the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic, the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004). His delegation had also noted the Advisory Committee's recommendation in its report (A/61/919) that the General Assembly should take note of the Secretary-General's report.

39. His delegation had later observed that the Secretary-General's report of 2 May 2007 had been revised and reissued on 30 May 2007 (A/61/890*), in response to a request by the same delegation. Although the Lebanese delegation had serious reservations as to how the issue had been handled, it had decided not to raise its concerns since General Assembly resolution 61/273 had been adopted by consensus. That resolution endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal to approve the proposed revisions to the logical framework for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2007 for the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004), the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic and the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau.

40. Currently before the Committee was a new report on the estimates in respect of special political missions, including that of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) (A/62/512/Add.1). The Lebanese delegation took the view that the General Assembly had already agreed on a logical framework for the Special Envoy; further deliberation therefore was not required.

41. Lebanon continuously strove to strengthen its already strong relations with the Syrian Arab Republic, which it considered to be a friendly and brotherly country. For that reason alone, the Lebanese people — represented unanimously by their political groups in the National Dialogue of June 2006 — had called for the establishment of full diplomatic relations between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic and the resolution of all pending issues between the two brotherly countries, including the delineation of their common borders.

42. The Lebanese delegation reiterated its understanding that Israel's violations of Lebanese sovereignty and the continued Israeli occupation of Lebanese territory fell within the mandate of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004). All of the Special Envoy's reports to the Security Council on the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004) referred to those violations. The Lebanese delegation had repeatedly emphasized that reports on the financing of special political missions should reflect the Israeli violations of Lebanese sovereignty as part of the indicators of achievement under the logical framework of the Special Envoy.

43. **Ms. Yu** Hong (China) said that, owing to the late submission of the reports, neither the Advisory Committee nor the Member States had had sufficient time to consider them. She would be grateful if the Secretariat would explain why some of the documents had not been issued until the day of the current meeting.

44. While she recognized the importance of special political missions, good offices and pre-emptive diplomacy, she was concerned at the enormous increase in the budget as compared with 2006-2007. The Secretariat should consider how best to use the resources to achieve the mandates so that Member States could see a growth in efficiency instead of just a growth in resources.

45. As far as the work of the United Nations was concerned, the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities and the responsibility to protect were closely connected. She therefore wondered whether there was any duplication or overlap of the functions of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities and the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect. She also questioned the necessity of establishing positions for a Special Assistant (P-5) to coordinate the activities of the two

Special Advisers, a Reporting Officer (P-3) and an additional Administrative Assistant.

46. Turning to the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), she also questioned the requirement of some $190 million for an integrated headquarters in Baghdad. Her delegation supported the provision of safe and secure facilities but wondered whether it might be unwise to build such a large construction, given the current instability in Iraq. Certain issues, including bidding and procurement, required further study.

47. When presenting large budgets in the future, the Secretary-General should take into account Member States' ability to pay. The Chinese delegation agreed with the recommendations contained in the report of the Advisory Committee (A/62/7/Add.29) and requested that the Secretary-General should submit a new complete and detailed proposal for the consideration of the General Assembly.

48. Lastly, she noted that in some cases the United Nations had set up several agencies in the same region; for example, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the United Nations Office of the Special Coordinator for Lebanon and the International Independent Investigation Commission had all been established in Lebanon. She wondered whether efforts had been made to avoid duplication and overlap and to improve coordination.

49. **Mr. Afifi** (Egypt) said that his delegation endorsed the comments made by the representatives of Cuba, Pakistan and China. It shared the concern of other delegations and the Advisory Committee that the reports on the financing of 26 special political missions had been submitted just two days before the official closing date of the session. His delegation would seek clarification from the Secretariat as to why the Committee was repeatedly faced with such a situation and how it could be avoided in the future.

50. His delegation concurred with the Advisory Committee that there might be duplication and overlap of functions among parallel structures in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs and recalled that the same concern had been expressed by the Office of Internal Oversight Services in its audit of the special political missions. When considering the issue, his delegation would focus on how to strengthen coordination among those structures.

51. Egypt was alarmed at the massive growth in resources for special political missions and noted that a disproportionate amount of the regular budget was allocated to such missions, to the detriment of other activities, particularly those related to development.

52. Egypt fully shared the Advisory Committee's view that a decision on the proposals of the Secretary-General to upgrade the position of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide from the Assistant Secretary-General to the Under-Secretary-General level for the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities and to establish an Assistant Secretary-General-level position for the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect was a policy matter that should be decided by the General Assembly. Once again, the Committee had been placed in a position where it was obliged to take a decision on a mandate which had not been approved by the General Assembly. Egypt fully supported the position of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries regarding the matter and refused to consider any related resources prior to approval of the mandate by the General Assembly.

53. Lastly, his delegation was willing to endorse the Advisory Committee's recommendations in respect of the facilities in Baghdad to facilitate the deliberations on the question.

54. **Mr.** Nagesh **Singh** (India) said that the pattern of late submission of documentation to the Committee in successive sessions must be addressed, as it hampered consideration of important issues by leaving too little time even to explore them in superficial detail. Turning to specific matters, he said that UNAMA, which played an important role in ensuring peace and stability in Afghanistan, should be given the personnel, infrastructure, safety and security resources it required. Recalling that the 2005 World Summit Outcome had indicated that the General Assembly should continue its consideration of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, he said that, as deliberations in the General Assembly had not yet produced a common understanding of the concept in question, particularly in the context of national sovereignty, his delegation regarded the appointment of a Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect as premature and lacking a legitimate mandate. His delegation agreed with the recommendations of the

Advisory Committee in that regard and did not support the proposal of the Secretary-General.

55. In addition, his delegation was concerned at, and would like further clarification of, the proposed change in the title of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide to Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities. While concepts such as genocide and war crimes had been formally defined, the same was not true of mass atrocities.

56. **Mr. Rosales Díaz** (Nicaragua) said that his delegation was concerned at the unacceptable recurrence of the problem of late submission of documentation on the financing of special political missions, particularly in the light of the large increase in the regular budget in general and sums for special political missions in particular. It also shared the Advisory Committee's view that there could be duplication of effort between the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. In addition, as the prospect of considering reform of the Department of Political Affairs in the Fifth Committee had receded, his delegation had been concerned to see that the Secretary-General, under the heading of special political missions, was proposing to establish offices and posts which would have an effect on that reform.

57. Recalling the observation already made by other delegations that the 2005 World Summit Outcome had indicated that the General Assembly should continue its consideration of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, his delegation shared the view of the Advisory Committee that the Special Adviser appointment proposed by the Secretary-General was a policy matter to be decided by the General Assembly.

58. Finally, his delegation wished to contrast the intense discussion of cross-cutting issues in connection with peacekeeping operations with the neglect of cross-cutting issues in connection with special political missions. For example, there were no staff conduct and discipline teams for special political missions.

59. **Mr. Safaei** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his delegation joined others in regretting that documents of considerable political and financial significance had been submitted late, preventing the Member States from discussing them in depth. Recalling the observations of the Advisory Committee and OIOS on coordination between the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, his delegation believed that clear criteria and a transparent decision-making mechanism should be established to choose the lead department for special political missions.

60. Like others, his delegation was concerned at the proposal of the Secretary-General to appoint a Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities, and emphasized the General Assembly's role in taking decisions on the substance and the budgetary and administrative aspects of that question. It supported full adherence to balanced geographical distribution in the management of special political missions, all of which operated in developing countries and required an in-depth understanding of the cultures and societies concerned.

61. Finally, his delegation expressed its overall support for the United Nations missions in his country's neighbours, Afghanistan and Iraq, and urged that those missions should be independent and oriented towards social and economic development.

62. **Mr. Torres Lépori** (Argentina) said that his delegation supported both the reclassification of the post of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide from the Assistant Secretary-General level to the Under-Secretary-General level and the establishment of a post of Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect. Recalling that the Advisory Committee had indicated that that was a policy matter to be decided by the General Assembly, he hoped that the post would be established before the next budget cycle.

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/62/L.24/Rev.1: United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (A/62/7/Add.17; A/C.5/62/10)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.84: Report of the Human Rights Council (A/62/7/Add.26; A/C.5/62/12)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.41/Rev.1: Situation of human rights in Myanmar (A/62/7/Add.18; A/C.5/62/13)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.4/62/L.9: Implementation of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (A/62/7/Add.22; A/C.5/62/14)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.20/Rev.1: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/62/7/Add.21; A/C.5/62/15)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.44: Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa (A/62/7/Add.20; A/C.5/62/17)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.49: The right to development (A/62/7/Add.19; A/C.5/62/18)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/62/L.25: Global Forum on Migration and Development (A/62/7/Add.23; A/C.5/62/19)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/62/L.29: New Partnership for Africa's Development: modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on Africa's development needs (A/62/7/Add.24; A/C.5/62/20)

Revised estimates relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 and to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 under sections 2, 23, 27, 28E and 35 and income section 1 and proposal related to unforeseen and extraordinary expenses arising from the implementation of decisions of the Human Rights Council (A/62/7/Add.25 and A/62/125)

63. **Ms. Van Buerle** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) introduced nine statements of programme budget implications submitted in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, and, in addition, the report of the Secretary-General on revised estimates relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 and to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 under sections 2, 23, 27, 28E and 35 and income section 1 and proposal related to unforeseen and extraordinary expenses arising from the implementation of decisions of the Human Rights Council (A/62/125).

64. Turning first to the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/62/L.24/Rev.1 on the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (A/C.5/62/10), she said that, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, it would request the Secretary-General to continue to provide the necessary support to the Centre and, in addition, recommend that the Centre's operating costs should be funded from the regular budget and that three posts, also funded from the regular budget, should be added to its structure.

65. The estimated costs of the three posts, and the related operating costs of the Centre for the biennium 2008-2009, would amount to $322,300 net ($360,200 gross). It should be noted that the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 would continue to provide for one P-5 post of Director of the Centre, and that other support to the Centre would continue to be financed from extrabudgetary resources. The additional requirements would arise under section 4, Disarmament ($322,300), and section 35, Staff assessment ($37,900), the latter to be offset by the same amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009. That would represent a charge against the contingency fund.

66. With regard to the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.84 on the report of the Human Rights Council (A/C.5/62/12), the General Assembly, should it adopt the draft resolution, would endorse the decision of the Human Rights Council to adopt resolutions 5/1 and 5/2, through which it had established the modalities for a universal periodic review mechanism, special procedures, the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee and a complaint procedure.

67. Additional resource requirements for the biennium 2008-2009 would amount to $8,147,600 (before recosting) over and above the level of resources proposed in the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 under sections 2, 23, 27, 28E and 35. That would represent a charge against the contingency fund for the biennium 2008-2009. The resources requested would include a net additional total of 18 new posts under section 23, Human rights, for the biennium 2008-2009.

68. It was envisaged that the preparatory work for the universal periodic review mechanism, as described in

Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, would begin in the last quarter of 2007 and that related resource requirements would be met within the appropriation approved for the biennium 2006-2007 under section 23, Human rights. The General Assembly would also be requested to approve the proposed modifications to the programme narratives and outputs incorporated into the programme of work for section 23, Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009, as outlined in paragraph 31 of document A/C.5/52/12.

69. With regard to the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.41/Rev.1 on the situation of human rights in Myanmar (A/C.5/62/13), the General Assembly, should it adopt the draft resolution, would request the Secretary-General to continue to provide his good offices and to pursue his discussions on the situation of human rights and the restoration of democracy with the Government and the people of Myanmar. The estimated costs of continuing the good offices of the Secretary-General to facilitate the process of national reconciliation and democratization through his Special Envoy for Myanmar for the year 2008 amounted to $781,900 net. Technical assistance to the Government of Myanmar, if requested, would be accommodated within the technical cooperation activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Resource requirements pertaining to the activities of the Special Rapporteur would be met from within existing appropriations.

70. Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, additional requirements of $781,900 would be charged against the provision for special political missions included under section 3, Political affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009. Approval for those requirements was being sought in the context of the report of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/62/512/Add.1).

71. In the case of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.4/62/L.9 on the implementation of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (SPIDER) (A/C.5/62/14), by adopting the draft resolution the General Assembly would endorse the SPIDER plan of work for 2007, the platform programme for the period 2007-2009 and the plan of work for the period 2008-2009 and would request the Secretary-General to implement the activities contained in the plan of work for the period 2008-2009.

72. Accordingly, additional resources for the biennium 2008-2009 totalling $604,000 (before recosting) would be required over and above the level of resources proposed in the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 under section 6, Peaceful uses of outer space, as well as an increase of $78,000 under section 35, Staff assessment, to be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009. That would represent a charge against the contingency fund. The General Assembly would also be requested to approve the proposed modifications to the programme narratives and outputs to be incorporated into the programme of work of section 6, Peaceful uses of outer space, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009, as outlined in paragraph 12 of document A/C.5/62/14.

73. With regard to the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.20/Rev.1 on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/C.5/62/15), adoption of the draft resolution would result in changes to the programme of work and resource requirements of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women previously submitted in connection with the revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive and resumed substantive sessions of 2007 (document A/62/515). Notably, the additional requirements had been revised downward to $10,807,950 from the original estimate of $14,156,400.

74. Furthermore, after the statement of programme budget implications had been issued, it had been determined that $35,100 of the additional requirements could be absorbed within the provisions contained in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009, under section 28E. Accordingly, additional resources would be required under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management ($10,357,400), and under section 23, Human rights ($415,450), of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009. That would represent a charge against the contingency fund.

The General Assembly would also be requested to approve the proposed modifications to the outputs to be incorporated into the programme of work of section 23, Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009, as outlined in paragraph 19 of document A/C.5/62/15.

75. With regard to the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.44 on the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa (A/C.5/62/17), the General Assembly, by adopting the draft resolution, would reiterate its request to the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) with additional funds and staff, within existing resources, to enable the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa to respond positively and effectively to the growing needs in the promotion and protection of human rights and in developing a culture of democracy and the rule of law in the Central African subregion.

76. Additional staff and non-post requirements over and above the level of resources in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 were estimated to be $520,100 under section 23, Human rights, and $53,500 under section 35, Staff assessment, the latter to be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment. The sum would represent a charge against the contingency fund.

77. With regard to the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.49 on the right to development (A/C.5/62/18), the General Assembly, should it adopt the draft resolution, would support the activities and mandate of the Human Rights Council's Working Group on the Right to Development, resulting in additional requirements of $47,000 under section 23, Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009. Although provision for those requirements had not been included under section 23 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009, it was proposed that the additional resources should be met from within the resources proposed under section 23.

78. The Secretary-General, in his report on revised estimates resulting from resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council at its fourth session in 2007 (A/61/530/Add.3), had informed the General Assembly that actions under Human Rights Council resolution 4/4 would give rise to additional requirements of $74,300 under sections 2, 23 and 28E. After having reviewed the provisions under those sections, the additional requirements called for in his report on revised estimates relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 and to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 under sections 2, 23, 27, 28E and 35 and income section 1 and proposal related to unforeseen and extraordinary expenses arising from the implementation of decisions of the Human Rights Council (A/62/125) and the statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.84 on the report of the Human Rights Council (A/C.5/62/12), the Secretariat wished to inform the General Assembly that the total amount of $74,300 would be met from within the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009. Thus, it would not be necessary to make use of the contingency fund.

79. With regard to the statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution A/62/L.25 on the Global Forum on Migration and Development (A/C.5/62/19), the General Assembly, should it adopt the draft resolution, would request the Secretary-General to present, at the Second Meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development to be held in Manila in 2008, an evaluation of the existing cooperation mechanisms on migration and development, in order to promote a coherent discussion of the migration phenomenon.

80. That evaluation would give rise to additional resource requirements amounting to $110,000 over and above the level of resources proposed in the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 under section 9, Economic and social affairs. That would represent a charge against the contingency fund. The General Assembly would also be requested to approve the proposed modifications to the outputs to be incorporated into the programme of work of section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009, under subprogramme 6, Population, as outlined in paragraph 4 of document A/C.5/62/19.

81. With regard to the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/62/L.29 on the New Partnership for Africa's Development: modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on

Africa's development needs (A/C.5/62/20), the General Assembly, should it adopt the draft resolution, would decide to hold a high-level meeting on "Africa's development needs: state of implementation of various commitments, challenges and the way forward" on 22 September 2008. It would also decide on the modalities, format, and organization of and participation in the meeting and request the Secretary-General to submit to the meeting a comprehensive report, with recommendations, on the same subject.

82. The high-level meeting would be considered part of the work of the General Assembly and the comprehensive report would be part of the normal documentation workload for the General Assembly. Therefore, there would be no additional requirements for conference services. The estimated cost of preparing the comprehensive report would amount to $86,000, required for consultancy services, as well as a provision for related travel for consultations with relevant stakeholders and to collect necessary information. Accordingly, additional requirements amounting to $86,000 would arise under section 11, United Nations support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009. That would represent a charge against the contingency fund.

83. **Mr. Saha** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) introduced the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the statements of programme budget implications just presented to the Fifth Committee.

84. As noted in its report (A/62/7/Add.17), the Advisory Committee had no objection to the proposals of the Secretary-General regarding draft resolution A/C.1/62/L.24/Rev.1: United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa. In its report on draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.84 concerning the report of the Human Rights Council (A/62/7/Add.26), the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that adoption of the draft resolution would create the need for an additional appropriation of $2,420,000 in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009, and that, in accordance with the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 and 42/211, those resource requirements would represent a charge against the contingency fund. The Advisory Committee's recommendations should be seen in the context of its report on revised estimates arising from the implementation of decisions of the Human Rights Council (A/62/7/Add.25).

85. As noted in its report (A/62/7/Add.18), the Advisory Committee had no objection to the proposals of the Secretary-General regarding draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.41/Rev.1 on the situation of human rights in Myanmar. In its report on draft resolution A/C.4/62/L.9 on the implementation of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (A/62/7/Add.22), the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that adoption of the draft resolution would create the need for an additional appropriation of $604,000 before recosting under section 6, Peaceful uses of outer space, and of $78,000 under section 35, Staff assessment, to be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009, and that, in accordance with the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 and 42/211, those resource requirements would represent a charge against the contingency fund.

86. In its report on draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.20/Rev.1 on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/62/7/Add.21), the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that adoption of the draft resolution would create the need for an additional appropriation of $10,357,400 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, and of $415,450 under section 23, Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009. In accordance with the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 and 42/211, those resource requirements would represent a charge against the contingency fund.

87. In its report on draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.44 on the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa (A/62/7/Add.20), the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that adoption of the draft resolution would create the need for an additional appropriation of $520,100 under section 23, Human rights, and of $53,000 under section 35, Staff assessment, to be offset by an

equivalent amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009. The Advisory Committee also recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of that mandate in the context of the performance report for the biennium 2008-2009.

88. In its report on draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.49 on the right to development (A/62/7/Add.19), the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should note that adoption of the draft resolution would not entail additional resource requirements under the proposed programme budget. In its report on draft resolution A/62/L.25 on the Global Forum on Migration and Development (A/62/7/Add.23), the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that adoption of the draft resolution would create the need for an additional appropriation of $110,000 under section 9, Economic and social affairs. It also recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to accommodate the additional requirement within the overall appropriation under section 9, and to report thereon in the context of the performance report for the biennium 2008-2009.

89. In its report on draft resolution A/62/L.29 on the New Partnership for Africa's Development: modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on Africa's development needs (A/62/7/Add.24), the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that adoption of the draft resolution would create the need for an additional appropriation of $86,000 under section 11, United Nations support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009. The Advisory Committee recommended approval of the additional requirements as a charge against the contingency fund.

90. Turning to the report of the Secretary-General on revised estimates relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 and to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 under sections 2, 23, 27, 28E and 35 and income section 1 and proposal related to unforeseen and extraordinary expenses arising from the implementation of decisions of the Human Rights Council (A/62/125), he said that the Advisory Committee, in the relevant report (A/62/7/Add.25), recommended approval of additional requirements for the biennium 2006-2007, estimated at $4,274,400, to be met from within the approved resources under the programme budget for that biennium.

91. For the biennium 2008-2009, the Advisory Committee recommended approval of additional resource requirements amounting to $815,000, including a reduction of $369,200 under section 2, an increase of $1,019,700 under section 23 and an increase of $164,500 under section 35, to be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1. It considered that no net additional resource requirements should arise with regard to the requests for additional resources for the biennium 2008-2009 under sections 27 and 28E.

92. With regard to the proposed inclusion in the biennial resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses of a new paragraph authorizing the Secretary-General to enter into commitments of up to $2 million for expenses arising from human rights measures, the Advisory Committee pointed out that the purpose of the provision for unforeseen and extraordinary expenses was to deal with expenses for which no provision had been made in the approved regular budget. If, on the basis of the experience of the last two bienniums, there was a recurrent need for special missions in the area of human rights, for the sake of budgetary transparency consideration should be given to including a provision for such requirements in both the budget outline and the proposed programme budget, similar to that used for special political missions. In the meantime, requirements for 2008-2009 relating to special human rights missions should continue to be handled as in the past.

93. **Mr. Gürber** (Switzerland) recalled that, by its resolution 60/251, the General Assembly had established the Human Rights Council for the purpose of addressing situations of violations of human rights by means of a universal periodic review of each State. In order to carry out its mandate, the Council had to be provided with adequate funding through the regular budget. His delegation had already announced its agreement with the proposed resource requirements for the institution-building package of the Human Rights Council.

94. It was regrettable that the funding requests for the Council had been made through three different

channels: the proposed programme budget, revised estimates and a draft resolution with programme budget implications. Such a fragmentary budget presentation made it difficult for delegations and capitals to get a comprehensive overall picture of resource requirements. Moreover, delegations had received an advance copy of the Advisory Committee's report only the previous Friday, which had given them only two days over the weekend to prepare for the discussions on the issue.

95. His delegation appreciated the efforts made by the Advisory Committee to identify possible cost savings and to report them to the Fifth Committee, in accordance with its mandate. However, his delegation wondered whether the Advisory Committee, in approving only about $3 million of the $12.4 million requested by the Secretary-General for the Human Rights Council, had taken that mandate to extremes, thus jeopardizing the timely and full implementation of the Council's mandate. Furthermore, the sometimes summary justification of the Advisory Committee's recommendations offered little ground for a meaningful debate.

96. While the Advisory Committee recommended that only a small part of the additional resource requirements for the Human Rights Council should be met through a charge against the contingency fund, it did not question, in most cases, the actual need for the additional resources. Rather, it suggested that those resources should be accommodated within the overall budget level for 2008-2009, given the expenditure patterns in the current biennium. That concerned mainly section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management; section 27, Public information; and section 28E, Administration, Geneva, where the second performance report (A/62/575) showed that actual expenditure in 2006-2007 had been lower than the revised appropriation for that biennium. In order to ensure proper implementation of the Human Rights Council's important mandate along the lines of that suggestion, his delegation would be proposing appropriate language in the informal consultations on the issue. Nonetheless, his delegation expected the Secretary-General to include all required resources relating to the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Human Rights Council in the framework of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011, separating the resource requirements for the Council from those relating to other mandates of the Office of the High Commissioner.

97. **Mr. Yamada** (Japan) said that the total amount of potential charges against the contingency fund was growing at a rate that could exceed the amount approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 61/254. General Assembly resolutions 41/213 and 42/211 set out a clear solution in such cases, which was that the Secretary-General would, in his consolidated statement of all programme budget implications and revised estimates, make proposals for revising the amount so that it would not exceed the available balance. It was a matter of great concern that that procedure had not been fully applied. Thus far, no concrete action had been taken by the Secretary-General to compile a consolidated statement and to bring the programme budget implications and revised estimates into line with the size of the contingency fund. Indeed, there had been an almost endless increase in the possible charges against the contingency fund. Moreover, no deadline had yet been set for the submission of programme budget implications and proposals for revised estimates, as required by resolution 42/211.

98. It was a matter of concern that several items which should not be charged against the contingency fund were included in the statements of programme budget implications that had just been introduced. For instance, outstanding conference costs that had previously been charged against the contingency fund, such as those relating to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, should be considered in the context of the programme budget, in accordance with resolution 41/213. In addition, requests for new posts should be considered in the context of the programme budget, not as additional expenditures to be accommodated by the contingency fund.

99. His delegation was resolved to work to ensure that charges against the contingency fund were appropriately considered, in line with General Assembly resolutions 41/213 and 42/211.

100. **Mr. Sena** (Brazil), speaking also on behalf of Argentina, expressed support for all the statements of programme budget implications before the Committee, including those relating to development activities. His delegation endorsed all the requests made by the

Secretary-General for posts and resources for the Human Rights Council with a view to providing full support for its universal periodic review process, in line with General Assembly resolution 60/251. His delegation would carefully consider the possible negative implications of the Advisory Committee's recommendations for the full implementation of the universal periodic review.

101. **Mr. Saha** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), responding to the comments made by the representative of Switzerland, said that the statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.84 (A/C.5/62/12) referred to resource requirements under conference management of $3.8 million for temporary assistance for meetings, or 0.5 per cent of the proposed budget for the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management. Given that a new interpretation team and new reviser capacity had been recommended, it was reasonable to question whether all the temporary assistance was needed. Under section 28E, Administration, Geneva, the requirements were barely 1 per cent of the proposed budget; a similar situation could be observed with respect to section 27, Public information. It was reasonable management practice to exhaust opportunities for absorption. If existing provisions were not sufficient, recourse through the performance report was in any case available. None of the Advisory Committee's recommendations were intended to impede the capacity of the departments in question to implement the mandated tasks.

102. **Ms. Samayoa-Recari** (Guatemala) said that her delegation endorsed the comments made by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee and requested that he should submit them in writing for the purposes of the informal consultations on the matter.

Procurement Task Force: resource requirements for procurement investigations (A/62/7/Add.15 and A/62/520)

103. **Mr. Sach** (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on resource requirements for procurement investigations (A/62/520), said that the report provided background information on the Procurement Task Force that had been established under the aegis of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) to conduct investigations into a number of irregularities concerning procurement. Following the establishment of the Task Force, the Secretary-General had reported in December 2006 on the ad hoc arrangements that had been put in place to support its activities (A/61/603). The report before the Committee set out interim arrangements to support the continuation of the Task Force during 2008 until long-term arrangements were established for the investigation of irregularities in procurement and other areas.

104. OIOS had reported on the activities of the Task Force for the 18-month period ended 30 June 2007 (A/62/272). At the time of writing of that report, the Task Force had accepted a total of 341 cases and had completed investigations for 63 of them. Experience had shown that investigations of large and complex procurement contracts were time-consuming and required special skills, background and experience. OIOS had assembled a highly specialized team with the requisite skills. The continuation of the Task Force would therefore provide the opportunity to complete, without interruption, the investigation of the large number of outstanding cases.

105. The report contained in document A/62/520 provided cost estimates for 2008. The estimated total cost was $4.9 million. As indicated in the report, charges for the Task Force would be apportioned between the peacekeeping budgets and the regular budget on the basis of shares of 85 per cent and 15 per cent respectively. It was anticipated that those amounts would be absorbed within the respective budgets.

106. The arrangements set out in the report were temporary in nature. The strengthening of the investigative capacity of the Organization and the establishment of long-term arrangements would require a comprehensive assessment, which would be made available to the Committee at the first part of the resumed session in the form of a report of the Secretary-General prepared jointly by the Department of Management and OIOS. In the meantime, the Task Force had much important work to do. The report provided for interim arrangements to allow that work to continue uninterrupted.

107. **Mr. Saha** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/62/7/Add.15), said that, in its report, the Advisory Committee emphasized the interim character of the arrangements described in the Secretary-

General's report and pointed out that it would revert to the issue of funding of activities implemented by the Task Force in the context of its review of the forthcoming reports of the Secretary-General on OIOS. Accordingly, the Committee's recommendations on that issue were without prejudice to its future consideration of the forthcoming reports of the Secretary-General.

108. Requirements for the Procurement Task Force for 2008, which were estimated by the Secretary-General at $4.9 million, would be apportioned between the peacekeeping budgets (85 per cent) and the regular budget (15 per cent). The Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should take note of the Secretary-General's proposed arrangements and of his intention to accommodate the related requirements, to the extent possible, within the appropriations for the period concerned and to report thereon in the context of financial performance reports. The Committee expected that those requirements would be absorbed within the approved appropriations.

109. **Mr. Hussain** (Pakistan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group had a number of concerns about the establishment of the Procurement Task Force and the piecemeal way in which its financing, its work and its future continuation had been presented to the Committee. That approach had undermined General Assembly resolutions 61/275 and 61/279, in which the Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to provide a comprehensive report on the Investigations Division of OIOS so as to pave the way for a comprehensive solution to the issue. The Group was therefore joining the current process as a political concession. The Procurement Task Force was an interim ad hoc entity whose work should not continue after 30 June 2008. Issues relating to the Organization's investigative capacity would be reviewed in the context of the comprehensive report to be prepared by the Secretary-General. In addition, it might be desirable for an oversight body such as the Board of Auditors to review the work of the Task Force. His delegation would be pursuing that possibility in informal consultations.

110. **Mr. Rashkow** (United States of America) said that, since his delegation attached importance to the work of the Procurement Task Force, it welcomed the proposed interim financial arrangements that would allow the Task Force to continue its activities in 2008. Noting the Secretary-General's intention to accommodate the related requirements, to the extent possible, within the appropriations for the period concerned, he said that there was a need to ensure adequate support for the Task Force so that it could complete the many outstanding investigations. His delegation also strongly supported efforts to deal with the concerns expressed by Member States regarding the manner in which OIOS conducted investigations.

111. For that reason, his delegation was disappointed that the technical report requested by the General Assembly on recommendations for the conduct of investigations, including a review of standards and procedures, had not yet been issued. Given the importance of ensuring that the Organization had a competent, impartial, objective and independent investigative capacity, the matter should be a top priority for consideration by the Committee.

112. In view of the concerns expressed by Member States regarding the conduct of investigations and the implications of such concerns for United Nations staff and others, it was imperative for the Committee to take prompt action to address the issues involved. Even if the time remaining at the current session did not permit the General Assembly to act on the report, the report should nonetheless be submitted at the current session, not only to respond to the repeated requests of the Assembly but also to enable the Assembly to address the concerns expressed by Member States at the earliest opportunity. It was also of critical importance for the Committee to take a decision concerning funding arrangements for the Procurement Task Force for 2008 before the end of the main part of the session.

113. **Mr. Cheok** (Singapore) said that discussion of the issue of the Procurement Task Force had been characterized by innuendo and misrepresentation, much of it, regrettably, generated by unnamed sources within the Organization. Anyone who had voiced concern about the conduct of the Task Force had been painted as pro-corruption or anti-reform and had been accused of trying to shut down the Task Force and its ongoing investigations. That was a simplistic misrepresentation intended to deflect attention from the real issues.

114. It was well known that a Singaporean national had had to endure investigation by OIOS and the Procurement Task Force for the past 23 months. Singapore's view that the person in question had been treated unfairly during the investigation was also well

known. The decisions of the Joint Disciplinary Committee and the Panel on Discrimination and Other Grievances vindicated that view. Both United Nations tribunals had criticized the methods used by the Task Force and OIOS, and had stated that the person in question had been denied due process. The case would soon be brought before the United Nations Administrative Tribunal. If compensation was awarded, it would be Member States, not the Task Force or OIOS, that would bear the cost. However, that case had moved on.

115. The real issue was accountability. No one was arguing that the United Nations should not have an internal audit and investigation arm or that the Procurement Task Force should be shut down while investigations into possible transgressions in procurement continued. However, it was expected that the report requested by the General Assembly on the review of the Investigations Division of OIOS would be ready soon. It therefore seemed logical to extend the Task Force's funding until mid-2008 in order to give the Committee time to discuss the issue in March without affecting the Task Force's ability to continue its work.

116. At the same time, the Procurement Task Force was expected to take responsibility for its actions. OIOS and the Task Force rightly emphasized the principles of transparency and accountability. However, if those principles were to have any legitimacy, they should be applied to OIOS and the Task Force as stringently as they were applied to others, if not more so. Assertions of improper behaviour on their part could not be ignored simply because they were the investigators. The Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services had written publicly that her staff had done nothing improper, contrary to the reports of two of the Organization's own tribunals, which had made allegations of inappropriate behaviour during investigations. Even the Administrative Tribunal had previously criticized the Organization's handling of due process rights.

117. In the interests of transparency and accountability, the investigators' conduct should be investigated by an independent ad hoc panel or an established mechanism such as the Board of Auditors or the Independent Audit Advisory Committee. It was clear that OIOS and the Task Force could not reasonably be counted on to investigate themselves. The issue was not trivial: the allegations came not from a single aggrieved staff member but from the Organization's own tribunals. There was a need for certainty that every United Nations staff member subject to investigation was treated fairly. Care must be taken to ensure that rights and procedures were not violated so as to preserve the integrity of the system and the trust placed in it to do its work properly.

118. Singapore had supported the establishment of OIOS in 1994 and had not objected to the creation of the Procurement Task Force in 2006. Most delegations supported the broad objectives of both entities. However, a distinction should be drawn between support for the objectives and support for the methods employed. The Task Force must meet the high standards of fairness, accountability and transparency which Member States expected of it. If two of the Organization's own tribunals had questioned whether the Task Force had met those standards, it was the responsibility of Member States to demand an explanation. It would be unconscionable to apply one set of standards to the Task Force and another to those it investigated. If there was doubt about the integrity of an investigation, the investigators should be investigated in order to settle the issue. The crux of accountability was that everyone was accountable, including the Procurement Task Force.

119. **Mr.** Nagesh **Singh** (India), endorsing the statements made by the representative of Singapore and the representative of Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Procurement Task Force had been established as an interim ad hoc entity to address a particular problem. His delegation had supported its establishment at the time. However, there was a lack of accountability in its functioning. Moreover, some of its claims relating to amounts of losses ascertained had been contradicted by the Secretariat, and there was no one to judge whether those claims of success were accurate.

120. His delegation agreed that the resource requirements for the Procurement Task Force represented another example of budgeting by instalment. The Task Force required close scrutiny, particularly in the context of a more comprehensive review of the Investigations Division of OIOS. His delegation regretted that the report in question would not be available before the end of the main part of the session and looked forward to considering it at the resumed session. He agreed that resources should be

allocated to the Procurement Task Force for the period up to 30 June 2008. Lastly, he reiterated his delegation's support for a competent, impartial, independent, transparent and accountable investigative entity within the Organization.

121. **Mr. Hussain** (Pakistan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, requested that the forthcoming report on the Investigations Division should be brought to the attention of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.